United Nations A/60/558–S/2005/722

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
16 November 2005

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixtieth session
Agenda item 19
Question of Cyprus

Security Council
Sixtieth year

Letter dated 16 November 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, and with reference to the ongoing efforts to prepare the ground for negotiations to resume on the Cyprus question, I wish to express our deep concern and disappointment about a number of suspicious and groundless assertions put forth by the Turkish Cypriot leader, Mr. Talat, concerning a so-called "rising trend of racism, chauvinism and ultra-nationalism among the Greek Cypriots". It is all the more suspicious that Mr. Talat chose to make these allegations on the eve of his recent visit to New York and his meeting with you, during which he discussed, as per his subsequent public statements, the issue of the resumption of negotiations on the Cyprus question. Both the substance and the format, as well as the timing of these allegations raise serious questions as to the real intentions and the overall objectives of the Turkish side and do not portend well for the future prospects of the efforts to achieve a just and viable solution to the Cyprus problem.

Firm in his plan of tactics that was designed after the 2004 referendums and unable to be swayed from it despite the important developments that have taken place ever since, Mr. Talat has unwaveringly and consistently engaged in an effort to promote his objectives to upgrade the status of the illegal regime set up in the occupied area of Cyprus by hiding his intentions under the guise of the so-called ending of the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots, which is presented as either a reward for "the good ones" or a threat to and leverage on "the bad ones". In the same vein, Mr. Talat has continued with his attempts to demonize those with whom he will have to negotiate once the resumption of the talks will be decided, through a series of unfounded accusations of unwillingness to solve the problem. Even more serious and dangerous is his decision to envenom the relations between the members of the two communities in Cyprus, as reflected in his allegations relating to so-called racist, chauvinistic and ultra-nationalistic attitudes among the Greek Cypriots and hostility towards the Turkish Cypriots.

The everyday peaceful and amicable interaction between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots following the partial lifting of restrictions on the freedom of

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movement, which had been imposed by the occupation regime for 29 years, and the over 15 million crossings that we have witnessed since April 2003 provide concrete and sound evidence that no hostility or lack of confidence exist among ordinary people and unambiguously show that Mr. Talat's allegations are totally unfounded and false. His attempts to overstate minor incidents and distort the underlying facts can only contribute to the germination of suspicions and mistrust between the two communities and raise the question whether Mr. Talat wishes the return to past policies of the Turkish Cypriot leadership, namely the theory that the two communities cannot live together. These allegations do not contribute to the aim of the reunification of the island and are, in fact, nothing more than an effort aimed at diverting attention from the current hardening of the positions of the Turkish side.

In addition, such provocative and inflammatory statements run contrary to the spirit and letter of what the then Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Kieran Prendergast, said during his briefing to the Security Council on 22 June 2005, namely "that a settlement would only be possible if the parties acted towards each other in a way that conveyed respect, understanding for one another's concerns and a desire for an early settlement".

It should also be pointed out that the Republic of Cyprus is a working democracy based on the rule of law and the full respect, promotion and protection of human rights and public freedoms. Furthermore, with the accession of the Republic of Cyprus to the European Union, all of its citizens, be they Greek Cypriots or Turkish Cypriots, automatically became citizens of the European Union, an area which is founded on the respect for human rights and the rule of law, and they are all entitled to and benefit from all the rights of European citizens.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 19, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Andreas D. **Mavroyiannis**